

in our system of justice. She is going to devote her life to defending the rule of law in the future, as she has in the past. I really think she is going to be extraordinary.

The second nominee the Senate will vote on this week has my strong support as well, Judge Deborah Boardman, nominated to the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland.

She serves as a U.S. magistrate judge in the Maryland District Court. Like Jackson-Akiwumi, she has received a "well qualified" rating from the ABA. She, too, will bring diversity to the courts.

She spent 11 years as a Federal public defender herself. She is bringing a perspective which is often not found in these court cases with sitting judges. I have nothing against former prosecutors. I have named a lot of them to the bench. But we ought to have diversity in background, experience, and the like.

She has experience in private practice. She is a dedicated public servant, and I hope my colleagues will support her.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I watched television Sunday night with my wife. There was a movie called "Selma." Oprah Winfrey had something to do with it because she was in it, and it was, as you might expect, a quality production.

It told the story of what happened in 1965 in Selma, AL. It showed the horrific images of Americans being beaten and brutalized in Selma for daring to protest peacefully. For what? For the right to vote.

Fewer people know about Turnaround Tuesday. That was the day, 2 days after Bloody Sunday, when many of the same people who had been beaten on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday went back to that bridge to make it plain that they were going to come back again and again until every right of every citizen to vote was secured. That was Turnaround Tuesday.

I had a lucky experience. The late John Lewis, who marched across that Edmund Pettus Bridge and almost gave his life in the process, took me, one foggy Sunday morning, for a walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and he told me what he remembered from that day.

I have seen pictures over and over again. There he is in his white raincoat, with a backpack, marching in the front of the line, and how he was bashed in the head by either a trooper or someone who came along trying to stop them from marching. He almost died as a result of it. It was something I will never forget. I feel blessed that I had that experience.

And then there was the vote on the floor yesterday. What a disappointment. Today, I want to say it is "welcome back" Wednesday. Welcome back

to the fight to preserve voting rights that has never ended.

It didn't start on that bridge in Selma, and it won't end in this Chamber in Washington. This battle is going to continue because there are those people who know that if you want to control America politically, you have got to control those who vote.

We saw it after the Civil War, when we ended slavery and African Americans initially had an opportunity to vote and lead in Southern States. And then, sad to report, my political party, the Democratic Party at that time, was part of initiating the Jim Crow laws, which made it difficult, if not impossible, to vote.

And the battle was on, and it is being waged to this day, about whether or not African Americans have a right to vote. Make no mistake. When Republicans come to the floor and go through these long, elaborate explanations of why a coordinated effort by Republican legislatures in 20 different States is just good government, I think they know better. It is not good government, and it is not good for the people of those States, particularly if you are a minority.

Well, this fight to prevent billions from buying elections and root out corruption in government didn't end with that filibuster yesterday. Republicans succeeded in delaying this debate for a time, but they are not going to derail it. This is too important. Our democracy is on the line.

Five months ago—I am sure Madam President will never forget it, as I won't—a murderous mob—five people died—a murderous mob attacked this Capitol and tried to overturn the Presidential election.

Who sent them? Well, it is clear to me who sent them: a vain, self-pitying former President who couldn't accept defeat or the will of the American people. So Donald Trump created a Big Lie that the election was stolen. He used that lie to incite that mob to attack this Capitol. He continues to peddle the Big Lie from his exile at some country club.

Now the party that coddled that failed President when he was in power is weaponizing the Big Lie and using it to justify a relentless attack on voting rights across America.

Three weeks ago, Senate Republicans used the filibuster to kill a bill creating an independent, bipartisan commission to investigate who was behind this January 6 insurrection. They killed it with the filibuster, just as they tried to kill the voting rights bill yesterday. That filibuster is an echo, sadly, of how it has been used in the area of civil rights for as long as it has been in the Senate.

This Big Lie is metastasizing; it is growing. Instead of stopping it, Republicans are using all their leverage to prevent us from confronting it. The filibuster yesterday was day one of this fight. It wasn't the end of the story.

Welcome to day two. We mean to keep marching until we cross that

bridge and stop this assault on our democracy and put an end to the Big Lie once and for all.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Deborah L. Boardman, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has been recognized.

DEMOCRATIC AGENDA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, it seems that for the past month Senate Republicans have watched as our Democratic colleagues send up one partisan test balloon after another.

They threatened a battle over a so-called equal pay bill, which turned out to be chum in the water for the trial lawyers but really not much else. Then they, once again, threatened the Second Amendment, but they couldn't find a friend across party lines to join them in that fight. So that trial balloon was popped.

And who could forget their promise to bring the improperly named Equality Act to the floor for a vote? Well, that balloon didn't take flight either. And, yesterday, the Democrats' democracy-destroying election takeover bill almost survived, but it too came crashing back to Earth after failing to clear a procedural hurdle.

Still, they have made the most of their time over the past month, holding up their string of failures as evidence that it is the filibuster and not the radically partisan nature of their agenda that is thwarting their progress.

As the Republican leader said at the beginning of this month, it was an agenda that was designed to fail. It failed to bring them the power that they are craving to have over the lives of millions of Americans. It failed to kill the filibuster, and it certainly failed the millions of Americans who have been forced to watch, dumbfounded, as this circus played out in realtime on their television screens.